

MINUTES
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2008 AT 7:15 PM
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO CHAMBER
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

1) ROLL CALL: A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:15 pm, in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Present for the meeting were Councilors Stephen P. Corbett, Marilyn M. Petitto Devaney, Susan G. Falkoff, Jonathan Hecht, Angeline B. Kounelis, John J. Lawn, Jr., Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Vice President Mark Sideris and Council President Clyde L. Younger. Also present were the Town Manager Michael Driscoll, Town Attorney Joe Fair. The Council Clerk was absent.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

There was a moment of Silence for former Retirement Board Secretary, Theresa Petricelli.

3) PUBLIC FORUM: None noted.

Councilor Sideris moved to Suspend the Rules in order to bring forward agenda item 6A, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote. Acceptance of Proclamation for Boston Biomedical Research Institute - Angeline B. Kounelis and Jonathan Hecht. Councilors Kounelis and Hecht noted Boston Biomedical Research Institute's accomplishments in the field of sciences and their strong community bonds. Councilor Kounelis read and presented the proclamation (attached). Drs. Balazs and Gergely thanked the Council for the recognition and noted that they are looking forward to working with the community and to continuing their scientist endeavors.

Councilor Sideris moved to bring forward all items in 5A, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

4). INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS:

- a) Informational Presentation on a brief overview of the Watertown Community Foundation and the status of community resources for social service needs in Watertown - Elizabeth Zwick, Executive Director of the Watertown Community

Foundation; and Board of Directors Roberta A. Miller, Andrew Bundy and William B. Ford.

The presentation included an overview of the Foundation's activities; a focus on this year's work; an outline of various funds and future activities. It was noted that the foundation is locally focused with a philanthropic emphasis on funding for the most vulnerable. Restrictive funds were reviewed including the Education Principle Fund; The Watertown Arsenal Income Fund; The Solomon Foundation; and Tufts Health Foundation. Unrestrictive funds include funding for the Neighborhood Block Party grants.

The Chair stated that he did not recall restrictions on the O'Neil fund. Ms. Miller stated that the WADC set up the legal structure for the Community Foundation and interpreted the donor's intent. It was interpreted the intent of his gift would be to benefit further generations, therefore only an excess of 5% of the principle would be used each year.

The Chair asked for a financial statement.

Councilor Devaney stated that the WADC created the Community Foundation. She asked for financial statements from beginning to present. Councilor Devaney further asked how block parties contribute to the education of our children. It was stated that the block parties are funded by the unrestricted funds and not the restricted education funds. It was noted that fundraising takes place through the block parties which benefits the food pantry.

She asked that salary of staff members be included in the financial statements.

Councilor Sideris stated that having become partially involved with the group, the group does a fantastic job identifying the needs of the community. He looks forward to continuing to work with the group.

Councilor Falkoff asked what the status of finding a coordinator is. It was stated that there is a concern that the position may not be sustainable over time due to money restraints. Therefore, other options are being looked into.

Mr. Ford reviewed recent monies distributed to approximately 20 groups.

- b) Informational Presentation on proposed Victory Field improvements – Thomas J. Sullivan, Recreation Director; David Polcari and Glenn Howard, Camp, Dresser & McKee.

The Manager noted that the Town contracted with Camp, Dresser & McKee for subsurface evaluation, to draft conceptual designs and develop preliminary cost estimates for artificial turf and other improvements at Victory Field.

Mr. Sullivan, Recreation Director provided a brief overview of the playing spaces in town.

Mr. David Polcari, from Camp, Dresser and McKee pointed out that his firm has completed over 40 artificial turf fields in Boston surrounding area and universities. The power point presentation outlined existing sites and constraints; comparison of design alternatives; advantages of artificial turf; construction impacts; project schedule and costs; and fundraising options. (See Attached)

Estimated costs were discussed for Alternative One - \$2.9 million; Alternative 2 - \$4 million.

Councilor Devaney stated that it is penny wise and pound foolish if we don't do this work.

Councilor Lawn stated that there is a real need for this type of infrastructure investment and spoke in support of Alternative 2. He indicated that there is a demand for the rental of fields, which will help down the road along with fund raising.

Councilor Sideris inquired about "allowances" in the costs for relocation of the bleachers and how confident the firm is on the allowances. Mr Howard stated that the allowances are a generous number.

Councilor Sideris asked if there is any potential to phase in the project to minimize the costs. Mr Howard stated that there is not a lot of flexibility there.

Councilor Sideris spoke in support of the project and the potential for revenue from the fields.

Councilor Sideris asked how we got from \$1.25M to 4.058M after having four significant meetings on this project.

Councilor Corbett echoed Councilor Lawn's previous points and noted that this is a project that residents deserve. Grant monies are intriguing to jump start this project and have the Planning Department work along side.

Councilor Falkoff indicated that she has been advised that that artificial turf is better for some sports than others. Mr. Howard noted that he had no antidotal information on that.

Mr. Howard provided a diagram of where people may be driving up to the storage sheds.

Councilor Falkoff asked Mr. Howard to go over the long term cost information. Mr. Howard clarified by stating that a better phrase would be – reduce in cost per play.

Councilor Kounelis questioned why the previous cost estimate of \$1.25M jumped to \$4M which she noted is difficult. Councilor Kounelis stated that until we can get seed money,

though worthwhile project, she does not know how she can go forward with the \$4M price tag given the fiscal constraints.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that artificial turf is not in keeping with a green solution. Mr. Howard stated that natural grass is just unsustainable and so, in that respect, turf is sustainable and thus a more green solution.

Councilor Falkoff asked about the Canadian Geese. Mr. Howard stated that he has not seen a problem with these geese and artificial turf fields.

Longfellow Road resident –

stated that it sounds like this is not going to be going forward soon. He asked if the private sector needs to get involved in fundraising. He noted that he does not want to hear that the Council is going to talk about it for another year.

The Chair stated that he believes it might require a private/public partnership, similar to what we did with the library. The community could help in a large measure in moving this project forward, he noted.

Mr. Sullivan explained that the monies have increased, but the project has become bigger.

Warren Tolman –

thanked the Council for their supportive comments. He noted that the condition of the field is without question, the worse field in the league. He noted that this is not in anyway the fault of DPW. The field hockey program is one of the top programs in the division. More and more of the leagues have turf fields and those who don't, the fields are immaculate. You have to balance obligations to the community, but you have an obligation to the kids as well. The time has come, let's tap into the private sector to assist, he stated.

The Manager reviewed the project figures. He noted that the town is looking to move forward with this project in a public/private partnership and that the town is not looking to do a loan authorization for \$4M. He noted possible construction dates for July or March of 09.

The Chair stated that the target date should be March in order to accommodate the football season

Mr. Polcari stated that a March start date may put a premium on the cost of the project.

Councilor Sideris stated that he will convene a meeting within 30 days.

Councilor moved the Sense of the Council to pursue all private and public funding for the project, seconded by Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote.

d)

Committee on Budget and Fiscal Oversight report and action on FY 2010 Budget Policy Guidelines –

Mark S. Sideris, Chair. Councilor Sideris read the Committee report (attached). An initial draft of the policy guidelines were provided in November. A second draft was written to

4) COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a) Human Services Committee report and action on appointment to the Board of Health –
John J. Lawn, Jr., Chair. Councilor Lawn read the Committee report noting that the appointment of Ms. Cynthia Brooks was unanimously recommended to the full Council. Councilor Lawn moved the appointment for a three year term to expire on February of 2010, seconded Councilor Devaney and adopted by voice vote. There was a brief discussion on the need for a meeting to discuss fire department staffing needs. Councilor Falkoff moved to refer the Fire Department's public safety concerns to Committee, seconded by Councilor Devaney.

b) Personnel and Town Organization Committee update on Compensation for Town Manager and Town Auditor –

Stephen P. Corbett, Chair. Councilor Corbett read the Committee report (attached) reviewing a number of points related to the Manager's salary. It was stated that the Committee voted to recommend a 4.5% raise for Fiscal Year 2009; with a first reading in January. It was further noted that Councilor Devaney asked for more time to review the data in Committee.

c) Committee on Public Works report on a review of pending issues –

Susan G. Falkoff, Chair. Due to time constraints, Councilor Falkoff summarized the Public Works minutes on pending issues (attached). Councilor Sideris moved to accept the report, seconded by Councilor Devaney. Councilor Devaney stated that missing in the minutes is a matter regarding a request from the Council President requesting a draft resolution to establish a Storm Water Advisory Committee. The Committee report was adopted as written by voice vote.

Councilor Falkoff moved to change the job description for the engineer to: town engineer/facilities manager; dropping the requirement for a professional engineer and seeking instead engineer in training, seconded by Councilor Devaney. Councilor Devaney stated that the job description doesn't meet what we need in Watertown and spoke in support to keep the registered engineer requirement and if we cannot find an engineer for the salary, then seek an engineer in training and drop the facility manager. The motion was adopted by voice vote.

Councilor Piccirilli stated that did not feel it appropriate to sidestep the department head and the manager to talk directly with town employees. However, he indicated that it would be appropriate for the Subcommittee to meet with Chief Orangio to discuss the subject matter.

Councilor Devaney disagreed, stating that the Subcommittee previously met with Crossing Guards to discuss their salaries.

Councilor Hecht stated that it is true that employees can come before the Council, or come before a Committee but an employee cannot cause a hearing to be posted for this purpose. If employees have concerns, they should be directed through their department head to the manager.

The Chair stated that Councilor Sideris is asking for the Council to consider a motion to hold a meeting.

Councilor Sideris stated and clarified that the Council does not have a protocol when someone writes a letter requesting a meeting with a Committee of the Council. He noted that he understands why they have requested the meeting, but stated he has concerns that the Council is setting a dangerous precedence and that a lack of procedure raises some concerns.

Councilor Falkoff withdrew her motion.

Councilor Sideris moved to accept the FY 2010 Budget Guidelines, seconded by Councilor Devaney. Councilor Devaney stated that she submitted items which were not included and so will be voting no. Upon a roll call vote, the FY 2010 Budget Guidelines were adopted 8-1-0, with Councilor Devaney voting no.

Councilor Sideris asked that Councilors rank sections 3 and 4. The Chair stated that he would like to review the guidelines first.

Councilor Devaney reiterated that her submissions were not included.

Councilor Sideris asked that the rankings be submitted the Friday prior to the January 13th meeting.

Councilor Hecht indicated that the guidelines are the budget policy of the Council, not any individual councilor and if a Councilor wants to add something, then propose it and have the Committee consider it.

5) INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS:

a) Informational Presentation on a brief overview of the Watertown Community Foundation and the status of community resources for social service needs in Watertown - Elizabeth Zwick, Executive Director of the Watertown Community Foundation; and Board of Directors Roberta A. Miller, Andrew Bundy and William B. Ford. Previously presented.

b) Informational Presentation on proposed Victory Field improvements – Thomas J. Sullivan, Recreation Director; David Polcari and Glenn Howard, Camp, Dresser & McKee. Previously presented.

6) MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS:

a) Acceptance of Proclamation for Boston Biomedical Research Institute – Angeline B. Kounelis and Jonathan Hecht. Previously presented.

b) First Reading on a proposed Ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2009 Compensation of the Council Clerk. Councilor Corbett provided a first reading which will be advertised in the local paper for a public hearing and vote on January 13, 2009.

7) REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

The Chair announced that the Holiday Reception will take place on December 15th. All are invited.

8) COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER:

a) Request for Confirmation of appointments and reappointments to the Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee. Unanimously referred to Public Works Committee.

b) Request for Confirmation of appointments and reappointments to the Historic District Commission. Unanimously referred to Economic Development and Planning Committee.

The Manager provided an update regarding Verizon FIOS noting that an email has been sent to senior members of the company regarding the town's interest in and negotiating with the cable franchise. Watertown is under consideration for 2009 FIOS. The Manager stated that if Watertown is selected for their 2009 bid plans, the town will be notified.

9) REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION – none noted.

10) ANNOUNCEMENTS – none noted.

11) PUBLIC FORUM – none noted.

12) EXECUTIVE SESSION –

There being no further business to come before the Council, Councilor Sideris moved to go into executive session at 11:30 pm to for the purpose of discuss strategy with respect to litigation.